

# THE BEACON



A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL  
AND THE HOME



VOLUME I.

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## Be Ready.

Many a boy has failed—it's true—  
Not because he'd no chance to do,  
But rather because, when the chance to him  
came,  
He wasn't prepared to make use of the same!  
This old world of ours, so active and steady,  
Is not going to wait for a boy to get ready!  
When she's a job for some fellow to do,  
She's not going to stand and wait long for you!  
There are other boys, p'rhaps on the very  
same street,  
Who are ready and waiting to spring to their  
feet!  
And, while they're succeeding, all due to their  
pluck,  
Don't go off complaining of having ill luck!  
But, if you'd succeed too, get busy, keep  
steady,  
For your time will come—and it pays to be  
ready!

*Selected.*

## As the Crow Flies.

Johnny Wheelan looked at the little side gate hanging on its hinge and wished very hard that he hadn't tried to swing on it. Father had told him not to, and Johnny had meant to swing but a minute, but he had taken only one or two rides when, ker-plunk! down came the gate, dragging its top hinge right out of the post.

Father would be sure to ask him how it happened. "Look here," Johnny said to himself, "that hinge must have been just barely holding on, or it wouldn't have pulled out so quick. I'm not that heavy!" And, having persuaded himself that this comfortable excuse was true, Johnny went around to the front porch, where his father was reading the evening paper. "What are those black birds, father?" Johnny asked presently, as a long-winged line of birds crossed the yard above the tree-tops.

"Crows," answered father. "Don't you know a crow when you see him, Jonathan?"

"I know 'em when they're close," said Johnny. "Where are they going, father?"

"Wherever it is, they are taking the shortest cut to it," answered Mr. Wheelan. "They always do. I never forget it, because, when I was a little boy like you, my father told me I could never be a real man unless my speech was 'as the crow flies'—right straight to the truth, no cutting off corners and going round hard places."

"Father," said Johnny, quite suddenly, "I was swinging on the side gate just now, and it broke down."

"That is told 'as the crow flies,'" said father.—*Jewels.*

*It may be that you ought to thank God most for not giving to you all you asked.*

## The Months.

January brings the snow,  
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,  
Thaws the frozen lake again.

March brings breezes sharp and chill,  
Shakes the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,  
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs,  
Sporting round their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,  
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings thunder showers,  
Apricots, and gilly-flowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn:  
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit:  
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Brown October brings the pheasant:  
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast—  
Hark! the leaves are whirling fast.

Cold December brings the sleet,  
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.

SARA COLERIDGE.

*For The Beacon.*

## A Valuable Cloak.

BY R. B. B.

Once upon a time, in a far-away land, there was a man who was compelled to go on a long journey to a distant city. Part of his way lay through a deep wood, which stretched away for miles on all sides, and which was reported to be very wild and dangerous and treacherous indeed for the wayfarer, given over to wild beasts and highwaymen; but he could not escape passing through it and was too brave to turn back when he came to it. He tried to find some one going in the same direction to accompany him for safety, but could not, and finally set out to pass through alone.

As he entered the wood, he found it very dark and dismal, and fully as sombre as represented. Everywhere were the great trees, growing very closely together and casting their gray shadows all about. Not a sound reached his ear, save the solemn

sighing of the wind in the branches, and not a trace of life was anywhere to be seen.

But our traveler plucked up his courage and trudged steadily on, hoping for the best and keeping a sharp watch for danger on every hand. Thus he had almost passed through the wood, and was beginning to think that perhaps the region was not as bad, after all, as it was painted, when of a sudden a band of robbers sprang out upon him from beside the road and seized him roughly.

He entreated them not to harm him, but let him go, as he had little or no money, or anything which they could desire; but they stripped him of all that he had, taking even his staff and clothing, and, after beating him left him nothing but an old cloak, soiled and tattered, which they had doubtless taken from some one else, but desired no longer to keep.

Still, he was glad to have escaped with his life, and, wrapped in the old cloak, hastened on to the farther boundaries of the wood, where, upon reaching human habitations again, he was taken in. When he had been clothed and fed, he proceeded to examine the old cloak very carefully in the hope of finding some clue to the identity of his assailants. It was very ragged and worn, and no doubt regarded as worthless by the robbers; but imagine his surprise on finding, hidden away in one corner of it, a *secret pocket*, which had evidently escaped detection by its former cruel possessors, and which contained many thousands of dollars in gold notes! Probably some one had hoped in this manner to transport this vast sum of money through the wood without detection by the thieves which infested it, but without success. Thus the highwaymen unintentionally showered upon their last victim a wealth far surpassing any which he had formerly owned.

The incident is suggestive in many ways. Often we have thrust upon us circumstances which we may not relish, but which, if endured with patience, prove to be of profit, like the robbers' old cloak. If a young person, for example, is set upon by some of his companions in a quarrelsome and vindictive way, but endures calmly without retaliation, instantly it becomes apparent to his comrades that he is in reality the bravest of all; that it is not the old cloak of cowardice that he has put on, but the beautiful garment of peace, the most regal of all robes.

### Wanted.

God wants the happy-hearted boys,  
The stirring boys, the best of boys,  
The worst of boys!

He wants them soldiers of the cross,  
Brave to defend His righteous cause,  
And to uphold His sacred laws,

That good and true  
The world may be,  
Redeemed from sin  
And misery.

God wants the boys!

God wants the happy-hearted girls,  
The loving girls, the best of girls,  
The worst of girls!

He wants to make the girls His pearls,  
And to reflect His holy face,  
And bring to mind His wondrous grace,

That beautiful  
The world may be,  
And filled with love  
And purity.

God wants the girls!

For The Beacon.

## The Pageant of the Months.

BY LUCY A. WEBSTER.

(An entire school may take part in this play, those possessing dramatic talent acting the parts and the rest singing the choruses behind the scenes. Organ, piano, or orchestra would be equally suitable for the instrumental music.)

The play represents a little boy's dream, and the beauty of the scene would be enhanced by an open fireplace with grate of glowing coals at back of stage. As the curtain rises, the little boy is discovered asleep in a large arm-chair near the fire. Around him are scattered story-books, and one lies open in his lap. The front of the stage in its decorations pictures the four seasons. As the curtain goes up, the soft strains of Schumann's "Träumerei" are heard behind the scenes. Then enters FATHER TIME.)

FATHER TIME (a tall boy with a deep voice, dressed in a robe and carrying a scythe over his shoulder. He wears flowing locks and long white beard).

Who knows me, doth know the worth of a day,  
For I am Time. When God gave light, straightaway  
Came Time to earth to keep the ages turning  
On their hinges; and, while the sun is burning,  
Step by step I follow his course.

Wise is he  
Who makes a friend of Time, for he shall be  
The maker of his destiny.

No man shall live  
Without his day, but he alone can give  
The color to it. I come, I pass, I go,  
Throughout the earth with steps not fast, not slow.

(FATHER TIME now passes diagonally across stage and takes his position at side front. Then enters QUEEN OF THE YEAR.)

QUEEN OF THE YEAR (a girl dressed in white tarlatan, and over her shoulders a short mantle of red trimmed with bands of white cotton batting. She carries an arm cluster of flowers and grasses, and wears a crown with the figures "1910" in gold).

Queen of the year am I. A twelve-month through  
My reign continues, then my hour is due  
To pass into oblivion where I rest  
With bygone years.

He that makes no jest  
Of life, but strives to serve his place and age,  
May write his name with mine on history's page.

(QUEEN OF THE YEAR passes across stage and takes position near FATHER TIME. Now comes the procession of the Months. As they go to position, they form a semi-circle with the sleeping boy as the central point at the back. First enters JANUARY.)

JANUARY (a boy in blue suit trimmed with bands of white cotton batting and wearing a red cap and red mittens).

I am January, named for Janus,  
Roman god of old,  
Who wore his faces front and back,  
So in the myths 'tis told,—  
One face front to see the future,  
And one to see the past;  
So January comes to link the new year  
With footsteps of the last.

(JANUARY goes to position and FEBRUARY enters.)

FEBRUARY (a boy in colonial dress with three-cornered hat).

February am I. Two names I write  
On Fame's eternal scroll,—  
Washington, Lincoln, the echoes of which  
Will through the ages roll;  
The father of his country one,  
The other the freedman's friend;  
As both for freedom suffered so,  
Their names with honors blend.

(FEBRUARY goes to position, while the CHORUS behind the scenes sings "America." Then enters MARCH.)

MARCH (a boy with a toy rabbit on his shoulder and carrying a kite with a long tail).

For Mars, god of war, I'm named,  
And by some 'tis stoutly claimed  
That all the elements together  
Join in March wind and weather.

(MARCH goes to position while April enters.)

APRIL (a girl in green tarlatan and upon her head a wreath of green leaves).

I come to carpet the earth with grass  
And clothe the trees in green.  
Softly I come, and, as I pass,  
My footsteps may be seen,  
For April showers  
Will bring the flowers  
To live in beauty's sheen.

(APRIL goes to position. MAY enters.)

MAY (a girl in blue tarlatan and upon her head a wreath of small blue flowers).

I am May, a month that's dear  
To little children everywhere;  
Best month of spring am I,  
With balmy days and cloudless sky.

(At this point a girl comes out and recites Tennyson's "The May Queen," after which she stands back of MAY as both take position. Then enters JUNE.)

JUNE (a girl in pink tarlatan and upon her head a wreath of pink roses).

June, the month of roses, I;  
My day's on golden wings pass by,  
And all the land is full of flowers  
When June comes bringing summer hours.

(A boy comes out and recites Lowell's "And what is so rare as a day in June?" after which both go to position. Enter JULY.)

JULY (a boy in "Uncle Sam" costume and carrying a United States flag).

I am very important July.  
The reason? Of course every one knows why,  
For the glorious Fourth  
Makes me worth  
A conspicuous place in the public eye.

(The CHORUS in background sings "The Star-spangled Banner," after which JULY takes position and AUGUST enters.)

AUGUST (a girl wearing a white shirt-waist suit, white sailor hat, and white canvas shoes).

August is the month for rest  
And freedom from all care;  
Then he indeed is truly blest  
Who can for rest repair.  
Toil faithfully till August days  
Come idly passing by,  
Then seek the shade and shun the rays  
Of the sun in an August sky.

(AUGUST goes to position. Enter SEPTEMBER.)

SEPTEMBER (a girl in tan tarlatan and carrying a sheaf of grasses turning brown).

September, month of Indian summer,  
Comes hazily as in a dream,  
When the air's amethyst enfolds all in a mist  
And things are not what they seem.

(SEPTEMBER goes to position. Enter OCTOBER.)

OCTOBER (a boy dressed as a farmer and carrying a peck of red apples).

October's fields are weighted down  
With sheaves of bearded grain,  
And all the roads are turning brown  
For lack of summer rain;  
Yet October's days are fairest  
And October's nights are rarest  
Of any to be seen;  
And best of nights of the month's delights  
Is night of Hallowe'en.

(At this point a girl comes out and recites Helen Hunt Jackson's "October's Bright Blue Weather," after which the CHORUS sings a favorite harvest song. Then OCTOBER and attendant go to position. Enter NOVEMBER.)

NOVEMBER (a boy in Puritan dress).

November, month of peace and plenty,  
And home-comings, too,  
When in Thanksgiving praise all voices raise  
As Puritans used to do.

(A boy or girl comes out and recites a favorite Thanksgiving poem, after which the CHORUS sings a Thanksgiving hymn. Then NOVEMBER and attendant go to position. Enter DECEMBER.)

DECEMBER (girl in white tarlatan dress spangled with silver stars and upon her head a wreath of holly and mistletoe).

Dearest month of all am I,  
The month of Christmas joys,  
When Santa comes down the chimneys high  
With gifts for girls and boys.

(A girl comes out and recites "The Night before Christmas," after which the CHORUS sings a Christmas carol. During the singing of the carol, DECEMBER and attendant go to position. Then Santa Claus comes on stage, goes over to the dreaming boy, and leans over the back of the chair. Santa Claus smiles broadly and winks knowingly at audience. At the conclusion of the carol FATHER TIME, QUEEN OF THE YEAR, and the TWELVE MONTHS join in singing, very softly, "The Water Mill," with music by Louis Diehl, as follows:

"Listen to the water mill  
All the livelong day,  
How the clicking of the wheel  
Wears the hours away;  
Languidly the autumn wind  
Stirs the greenwood leaves,  
From the fields the reapers sing  
Binding up the sheaves;  
And a mem'ry o'er my mind  
As a spell is cast,  
The mill will never, never grind  
With the water that is past.

"Take the lesson to yourself,  
Loving heart and true,  
Golden years are fleeting by,  
Youth is passing, too.  
Strive to make the most of life,  
Lose no happy day;  
Time will never bring you back  
Chances swept away;  
Leave no tender word unsaid,  
Love while love shall last;  
The mill will never, never grind  
With the water that is past."

(The curtain falls to the sweet strains of Nevin's "Good Night," from his "Venezia." It is suggested that this entertainment may be lengthened by the addition of other appropriate recitations and songs.)

### Japanese Heroism.

Subjoined is the translation of a message written by Lieut. Tsutoma Sakuma, who was in command of the Japanese submarine No. 6, which foundered, as reported in the *Times* of April 18, while manœuvring in Hiroshima Bay. The message was found in the conning tower of the submarine after she had been brought to the surface:—

"It is with the deepest regret that I write this message to describe the loss of this boat with my fellow-officers and men, due to my own fault. I would here specially mention that all steps have been taken to raise her, my comrades and men working earnestly and calmly till the end. I ordered the ship to dive with the engine running, but, as I found she went down too far, I tried to shut the valves which admit the sea water to the ballast tank, but unexpectedly the chain working these valves broke, and I was left helpless, unable to control the boat. Meanwhile the tanks were filled with water, and the boat went down at an incline of about 25 degrees. After striking the bottom, the water began rushing in; the switchboard was immersed in water; all electric light went out; the fuses burnt away, and the boat was filled with poisonous gases, so that we experienced the greatest difficulty in breathing. Under these conditions we worked our very utmost with the hand pumps to empty the main ballast tank, which, I believe, we succeeded in doing, although we could not read the gauges, owing to darkness. No electric current was available, as I mentioned before, and our last hope of rising to the surface lay in working the hand pumps only.



RESIGNATION—C. A. CORBINEAU.

"I write this in the dim light coming from the conning tower.—11.45 A.M.

"I earnestly beseech his Majesty to grant me forgiveness and to succor the families of my comrades and men who have lost their lives in this perishing boat. This is my only wish.—12.30 P.M.

"It is with the utmost difficulty that I can breathe, though I am sure we must have blown out the gasoline entirely from the tanks. I cannot continue any more.—12.40 P.M."—*London Times*.

### Hoar Frost.

The tires were two of Saturn's rings;  
The slender spokes and the shining springs  
Were of twisted moonbeams; the handle-bar  
Was a single ray from the nearest star;  
And the saddle was cut from a sunset cloud.  
Doffing his snowy cap to the crowd,  
A rosy cherub, alert and gay,  
Wheeled swiftly off down the Milky Way;  
And the dust that arose, so soft and white,  
Sparkled thick on the fields in the morning light.

MABELLE P. CLAPP.

"Can you stand on your head?" asked a visitor of little Dudley. "No," he replied, "it is too high up."

### She Trusted Me.

Charles V., emperor of Germany, was one of the ablest kings and bravest soldiers that ever lived. When danger threatened his country or his people, he was ready to face it. He knew no fear. One day in camp he was told that a swallow was building her nest upon his tent. He gave orders that it should not be disturbed. So the pretty nest with its dainty, soft lining was finished, and soon the mother bird was sitting on her pearly white eggs. But before the young birds were hatched the army had to break camp. The tents were all struck except that of the emperor.

He said: "Let it stand. I can get another shelter, but she cannot for this brood. She trusted me for a home. I will not fail her." Surely the bravest are the tenderest.

Every rose is an autograph from the hand of the Almighty God. On this world about us He has inscribed His thought in those marvelous hieroglyphics which sense and science have been these many thousand years seeking to understand. The universe itself is a great Autograph of the Almighty.

THEODORE PARKER.

For The Beacon.

## Plants and Prayer.

BY CHARLES W. CASSON.

The best sermon I ever heard on prayer was preached to me one day, many years ago, in a cellar, by a potato. I was busy down there when I saw near the only window in the place the end of a long vine. Wondering somewhat to see anything growing in that dark place, I examined it, and found that it had grown from a potato that lay in a dark corner fully six feet from the window.

What did it mean? Why, it meant that the potato in the dark became conscious of the life within itself and the light without. And so it reached forth, and tried its best to reach the light that came in the dusty window. Slowly it sent its vine-fingers towards the brightness of the sun.

Was it not reaching out its hands in prayer to the God of the sunlight? Was it not showing by that crawling vine its desire to get into the brightness of the day outside the cellar? Was it not trying to get away from the darkness and death of the place into the light? Was it not just simply praying?

Prayer is just the reaching forth of a person for that which is higher and better. It is the desire to get into the sunlight of God. Often we are compelled to be in the shadow. But, when we are there, we long to be in the light, and so we reach out in prayer towards it.

Prayer is more than just the wishing. We must never forget that. There is no power in the wish itself. It is useless to wish when we do not also will. God never gives to any person as the answer to prayer what the person is able to secure for himself. If he did, it would be a very simple matter to pray for this or that, and it would come. Prayer would then be just like rubbing Aladdin's lamp, when all the genii brought everything that was demanded.

Prayer means putting forth. The potato did more than wish,—if potatoes *do* wish,—that it could reach the light. It put forth its strength, and by persistent effort it was at last able to have its wish granted. From its place in the corner it sent forth its prayer and its living energy.

So must it be with us. We all wish for the good and to be good. But it is only when we add our will to our wish and our determination to our desire that we find our prayer answered. The boy who wants to learn is praying for education and for light, but his prayer is useless until he puts forth his energy by going to school or by reading the books that will give him the education and the light he wishes to have.

Prayer is more than words. That potato could not speak at all, yet it prayed most truly. And we must learn that to say certain words in the form of a prayer is not of any use. And, when we do this, and are so satisfied with it that we do not do anything more, it is really harmful. The person who repeats word prayers over and over again, like the Chinese, who put their written prayer in a wheel and turn it round and round, need not expect to receive much good from his praying.

The greatest prayers are never spoken at all. Words are not able to express them. When you stand before Niagara Falls and see the river plunging majestically over the precipice, and the perpetual rainbow glittering in the spray, and the force of the falling waters shaking the earth, and you realize

that this is only one of nature's toys that God has made, you feel yourself praying to the God whose power is so great. Or, in the presence of wonderful beauty, you pray to God to make you also beautiful, but your prayer could not be expressed in words.

After all, prayer is just an answer to prayer. Does that sound rather strange? What I mean is that man's prayer is just an answer to God's prayer. Did not the potato just respond to the prayer of the light to come out of the darkness? And do not we just respond to the prayer of God, when we desire to become pure and strong and helpful? God is praying to you every day and every minute. He desires you to be good and true and noble. Will you not answer his prayer?

All plants pray, lifting up their leaf hands to the sunlight. Every leaf on every plant turns to the sun. And all men pray in just the same way, turning to God, and receiving of Him the power and the life we all need. All plants obey the impulse to pray. Let us be as wise.

## A Helping Hand.

A helping hand we all may give,  
If but a pleasant word to say,  
And something find each day we live  
To help another on the way.

A helping hand may sow the seed  
From which the fruits of goodness grow,  
And to the right may gently lead  
The erring from the path of woe.

A helping hand to all mankind,  
Among the rich, the poor, and low,  
In every state of life can find  
An act of kindness to bestow.

A helping hand we all may need  
When darkest sorrows leave their trace,  
Some one to comfort and to lead,  
To give us strength and needed grace.

A helping hand where'er we go  
A ray of sunshine may impart,  
And but a deed of kindness show  
A noble and a generous heart.

A helping hand is ever near  
In passing through life's troubled tide;  
When all the world seems cold and drear,  
It is a never-failing guide.

Selected.

## The Value of Common Things.

A nobleman was once showing a friend a collection of precious stones which he had gathered at great expense. "And yet," he said, "they yield me no income."

His friend replied, "Come with me and I will show you two stones which cost me only \$25 each, yet they yield me a considerable income."

He took the nobleman to his grist-mill and pointed to the two gray millstones, which were busy grinding out meal.

It is not always the sparkling gem that has real value, but the common stone. It is well enough to be brilliant, but it is better to be useful.—Myrtle.

The presence of the Lord with man is first given when he loves his neighbor.

SWEDENBORG.

## RECREATION CORNER.

## ENIGMA XI.

I am composed of 10 letters.  
My 2, 9, is a preposition.  
My 4, 10, 1, 7, is a flower.  
My 3, 10, 4, 8, is a vegetable.  
My 5, 4, 6, is part of the body.  
My whole is a river in the United States.

LETTIE LIBBY.

## ENIGMA XII.

I am composed of 8 letters.  
My 3, 7, 2, is a rod.  
My 5, 1, 8, is a light from the sun.  
My 6, 4, 4, 2, is an entrance.  
My whole is a holiday.

MELVILLE GEYER.

## ELISIONS.

From a blossom take the first letter and get opposite of higher. From that word take away the first letter and get one who is indebted.

From what grows on trees take away the first letter and get the edges of a house roof. From that word take away the first letter and get prayers.

From to thoroughly mix take away the first letter and get to let for temporary use. From that word take away another letter and get a terminus.

From to whiten in the sun take away a letter and get to thoroughly dissolve, and take away a letter again and get the opposite of every.

From a grain take away a letter and get opposite of cold, take away another letter and get what every one does.

## FLOWER PUZZLE.

1. I planted a product of the dairy and a dish with a handle. What came up?

2. I planted a happy facial expression and an instrument used for chopping wood. What came up?

3. I planted a part of a railroad train and all the people in America. What came up?

4. I planted an animal of bovine genus and a cutting from a vine. What came up?

5. I planted a man's name and a feather. What came up?

6. I planted a song-bird and something worn by a horseman on the heel of his boot. What came up?

Selected.

## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 9.

ENIGMA VIII.—Ulysses S. Grant.

NUTS TO CRACK.—1. Pecan. 2. Doughnut. 3. Almond. 4. Peanut. 5. Brazil nut. 6. Butter-nut.

SCRIPTURE PUZZLE.—1. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.

2. Love is the fulfilling of the law.

3. Little children, love one another.

4. Love seeketh not its own.

5. Many be called, but few are chosen.

6. Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life.

7. Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

8. O sing unto the Lord a new song.

9. Praise the Lord, O my soul.

10. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Impatience never commanded success.

CHAPIN.

## THE BEACON.

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